

## Canada-PEI Business Development Program: SKILLS

### PROGRAM FLOW

#### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THE SKILLS PROGRAM?

SKILLS is being delivered by the Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture (PEIDA) and by Holland College. SKILLS is funded through Growing Forward.

PEIDA will be handling applications and approvals; Holland College will be conducting the assessment and development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), all aspects of case management, all financial contracting, participant surveys and payments.

The following are the key steps to access the SKILLS program:

#### **Application Form**

Complete the application form and submit it to the address identified on the form. The form will also require that you provide some documents. Applicants will have to provide proof of at least \$15,000 annual gross farm sales. Beginning farmers will have to demonstrate that their farm business will have within three years, or already has, annual gross farm sales of \$15,000 or more. Individuals who intend to establish a farm business must provide proof of ownership or control of (owns/rents/leases) productive agricultural assets to generate farm income, and a farm budgetary forecast.

Please verify that the application is complete and signed, and that you have provided the necessary documentation. You will also be asked to declare that you are not receiving or approved for Employment Insurance (EI) Part 2 funding for training.

#### **Application Approval**

Your application will be reviewed by PEIDA and you will be notified of whether or not you are eligible for SKILLS. **At this point, no funds have been set aside or guaranteed for you.** Even though you may be eligible for SKILLS, the program could be out of funds before your Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is approved.

#### **Referral**

Once your eligibility for the SKILLS program has been approved, you will be referred to Holland College for Assessment and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Development.

#### **Assessment**

The SKILLS program covers the cost of Assessment - there is no charge to the participant.

The Assessment will be customized to each participant and is provided by highly qualified professionals. It will involve an interview and could include some standard tests that are meant to help you know what strengths and skills you already have, and where you might need some help to achieve the outcome you want, or prepare to take training in the areas you want.

### **Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Development**

The ILP is a learning plan custom designed for you. The Learning Plan becomes your contract and will outline what SKILLS will fund, what courses or programs you have selected, and what goals you may have. A Case Manager will be assigned to individuals to assist them to meet the objectives as identified in the Individual Learning Plan. The plan can be modified as you go along, in consultation with your Case Manager. **It is at this point that funds are set aside and committed for you.**

### **ILP Approval**

The ILP will be submitted on your behalf to PEIDA for final funding approval.

### **Training**

Once the ILP is approved by both Holland College and PEIDA, you may begin to take approved courses and/or training.

### **Payment Claims**

The ILP contract outlines which expenses are covered under SKILLS. Some costs may be paid directly, such as tuition. Other costs should be claimed through Holland College on the schedule you have agreed to and must be confirmed with receipts or other proof of payment. For clarification on payments please contact your Case Manager.

### **Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Changes**

As time goes by, you may want to change your ILP by adding more training, changing the timing of a course/program, or dropping something. This should always be done in consultation with your Case Manager. Additions to the ILP will need to be approved if they involve additional costs.

### **Additional Counselling**

If you experience any difficulties, have questions, or feel that you want to change your direction, you can access additional Counseling. Please communicate this with your Case Manager.

### **Follow-Up**

Your Case Manager will be in touch periodically. However, you can certainly contact him/her when you have questions or want to give an update on how you are progressing.

### **Surveys**

During your involvement in the SKILLS program, you will be asked periodically to provide

some information through the form of a survey. This invaluable information is intended to help gauge the effectiveness of the program, and make adjustments over time. All information provided by you will be protected and treated as confidential.

**Disputes**

If you have concerns about how your application or file is handled, you will have access to a review panel that will investigate your concerns.